

## **Abstract Creation**

**(A checklist follows the examples)**

Excerpted from Simon, M. K. (2011). *Dissertation and scholarly research: Recipes for success* (2011 Ed.). Seattle, WA, Dissertation Success, LLC.

*Find this and many other dissertations guides and resources at*  
<http://dissertationrecipes.com/>

An abstract is a concise summary of a research study and a useful tool for others to have a clear grasp of the research that was conducted. Because on-line search databases typically contain only abstracts, it is extremely important to write a complete but concise description of your work to entice potential readers into obtaining a copy of the full paper. If the reader decides to read the entire article, the abstract can function as a map of the writer's arguments and the validity of the findings. A sample proposal abstract, a sample dissertation abstract, and an abstract checklist follow.

(Sample Proposal Abstract)

**[briefly state the problem]** Despite more than 50 years of attempts to improve mathematics education, and the simultaneous prevalence of fears associated with learning mathematics in the United States, the problem of mathematics anxiety among students still remains. **[briefly state the purpose and nature of the study]**. This qualitative phenomenological study seeks to elucidate college students' perceptions regarding the phenomenon of mathematics anxiety. **[briefly state the research questions as statements]** The research questions will reveal the lived experiences of participants regarding mathematics anxiety. **[briefly state the theoretical or conceptual framework]** Conceptually this study is framed within theories of motivation, disposition, and constructivist learning. **[briefly state the means of data collection]** Data will be

collected through in-depth interviews to provide detailed descriptions of the participants' experiences and provide the basis for analysis. **[briefly state the sample and population]**. Participants from a university in the Northeastern United States will be selected for participation based on their self-disclosures of overcoming fear of mathematics. A series of taped and transcribed interviews will be conducted. **[briefly state how data were analyzed]** A line-by-line analysis of participants' responses will be performed to reveal critical themes including causes of, and strategies for, reducing mathematics anxiety. **[briefly state the findings]** The results of this study could provide insight for mathematics teachers at all grade levels on how clear, methodical explanations of mathematical principles and algorithms, motivational practices, hands-on activities, use of different models, and positive and supportive learning environments can enhance student attitudes toward mathematics. **[briefly state how positive social change could come from the study]** This study could contribute to positive social change by providing practical classroom strategies that have reduced students' mathematics anxiety. By reducing mathematics anxiety, more students may elect to take math-related courses and enter rewarding math-related careers.

(Sample Dissertation Abstract)

**[briefly state the problem]** Despite more than 50 years of attempts to improve mathematics education, and the simultaneous prevalence of fears associated with learning mathematics in the United States, the problem of mathematics anxiety among students still remains. **[briefly state the purpose and nature of the study]** This qualitative phenomenological study was focused on understanding college students' perceptions regarding the phenomenon of mathematics anxiety. **[briefly state the research questions**

**as statements]** The research questions explored the lived experiences of participants regarding mathematics anxiety. **[briefly state the theoretical or conceptual framework]**Conceptually this study was framed within theories of motivation, disposition, and constructivist learning. **[briefly state the means of data collection]**Data were collected through in-depth interviews, which provided detailed descriptions of the participants' experiences and created the basis for analysis. **[briefly state the sample and population]**Twelve participants from a university in the Northeastern United States were selected for participation based on their self-disclosures of overcoming fear of mathematics. A series of taped and transcribed interviews were conducted. **[briefly state how data were analyzed]** A line-by-line analysis of participants' responses was conducted, leading to the disclosure of critical themes that included causes of and strategies for reducing mathematics anxiety. **[briefly state the findings]**The results of this study provide insight for mathematics teachers at all grade levels on how clear, methodical explanations of mathematical principles and algorithms, motivational practices, hands-on activities, use of different models, and positive and supportive learning environments can enhance student attitudes toward mathematics. **[briefly state how positive social change could come from the study]**This study contributes to positive social change by providing practical classroom strategies that can reduce students' mathematics anxiety. By reducing mathematics anxiety, more students may elect to take math-related courses and enter rewarding math-related careers.

### ***Abstract Checklist***

- The abstract is ONE un-indented paragraph.
- In the dissertation, the study is referred to in the past tense; in the proposal the study is referred to in the future tense.
- There are no citations in the abstract.
- The abstract meets the word count required by the university (the abstract is *never* more than one page).
- There are no unnecessary words.
- The first time any acronym is used its' meaning is written out and the acronym appears in parentheses; thereafter the acronym is used.
- The problem is clearly and succinctly stated.
- The purpose of the study is clearly and succinctly stated.
- The nature and methodological approach are clearly and succinctly stated.
- The gap in the literature that was filled is briefly noted.
- The conceptual or theoretical Framework is briefly explained.
- The manner in which data were (or will be) analyzed is noted.
- The results and findings are elucidated.
- The connection of the findings to the university's mission and goals is explicated.
- There are no grammatical errors.
- Scholarly language is used throughout the abstract.
- Numerals are used in the abstract (no written out numbers) unless a number is needed at the start of a sentence.
- Each sentence adds value to the elucidation of the study; there is no redundancy.